Comments on CE-BA 1 (Submitted by Bill Whipple)

One objective of CE-BA 1 was to retain the historical fishing grounds of the golden crab fishery.

Intensive collaboration between golden crab fishermen and Council members and staff aimed at fulfilling this objective.

Unfortunately, the complexity of the overall task took its toll and the objective fell short in two areas: coral boundaries and buffer zone with royal red fishermen.

1) At least three golden crab fishermen have identified, in their traditional fishing areas, significant reductions in the grounds available to them. These reductions became apparent only after the final publication of the HAPC boundaries. We were advised to delay efforts to pursue the issues until work began on CE-BA 2. We now request an opportunity to work with Council and staff to correct what we believe are inadvertent discrepancies between original intent and final result.
2) During the development of CE-BA 1 a written agreement was formulated between golden crabbers and royal red shrimpers, approved by their attorney and confirmed by a letter to Duane Harris, then Chairman of the Council, that gave access for golden crabbers to royal red grounds. This agreement confirmed a longstanding practice approved by the fishermen affected. The agreement was to be honored by the terms of CE-BA 1. Only after the fact did golden crabbers learn that the agreement was left out of the final document, apparently at the request of Law Enforcement. For years, use these grounds has been an important element of our historical practice. There has never been conflict of any sort between shrimpers and crabbers. Accordingly, we would like to have the issue revisited.